

Comparing Practical Theology across Religions and Denominations^{*}

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Abstract:

While significant research and practice has examined congregational involvement in providing for those in need, few have looked at the denominational theology that informs these initiatives or influences the non-profit systems created to provide them. Drawing on ethnographic research from the Faith and Organizations project, a national research/practice initiative designed to explore the relationship between religions and faith based organizations, this paper compares the practical theology behind stewardship of social welfare and educational programs for Catholics, Mainline Protestants, Evangelicals, Jews, Quakers and African American Christians. The paper returns to older, expanded definitions of stewardship and provides identifies three stewardship systems based on religious practical theology. It observes strengths and weaknesses of each system and offers practical suggestions for strengthening connections between faith communities and FBOs in each system.

Keywords: Theology, Religion, Religious Institutions, Catholics, Protestants, Christian Stewardship

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Faith-based organizations (FBOs) have been central to the U.S. health and social welfare system since its beginnings, and remain important providers of health care, senior services, social services, emergency assistance, community development, and education today (Cnaan, Wineburg and Boddie 1999, Hall 1990). As Ammerman (2005: 179) points out, faith-based organizations such as Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Charities, various Jewish organizations, and the Salvation Army comprise some of the largest providers of social services in the U.S., totaling 700,000 faith-based agencies in 1992. Catholics run the largest health systems in this country, and the largest independent school system (Wittberg 2003; Cochran 1999, Walch 1996). While some scholars presume that the larger, established faith-based organizations have become more secular over time (Smith and Sosin 2001), others find religious traditions still firmly embedded even in multi-million dollar institutions whose funding comes primarily from government sources (Ammerman 2005, Unruh and Sider 2005, Schneider 2006, Schneider, Day, Anderson 2006). A growing body of research looks at the characteristics of these organizations (Jeavons 1994 and 1998, Demerath et al 1998, Monsma 1996, Campbell 2002, Kennedy and Bielefeld 2003, Sider and Unruh 2004, Bane, Coffin and Higgins 2005, Smith and Sosin 2001). Several typologies have been created attempting to clarify what makes an organization faith-based (Sider and Unruh 2004, Smith and Sosin 2001, Ebaugh et al 2006).

Other research has focused on the role of congregations in providing these services (Cnaan et al 2002, Chaves 2004, Chaves and Tsitsos 2001, Grettenberger 2001, Unruh and Sider 2005). This literature uniformly shows that most faith communities regularly work with other non-profits to support those in need, rather than develop separate programs themselves (Chaves and Tsitsos 2001, Cnaan et al 2002, Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000, Foley and Hoge 2007, Ammerman 2005, Wuthnow 2000). African American congregations are an exception to this pattern: they are more likely to

develop comprehensive programs and seek government funds than white-dominated congregations are. Previous research has traced this difference to the African American Church's historic role as central community institutions (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990, Day 2002).

Few studies, however, explore *the theologies motivating the connections between FBOs and their founding faith communities, or the specific organizational forms structured by these theologies* (Wittberg 2000, 2006; Jeavons 1994, Thiemann 2005, Hehir 2000 and 2002, Curran 1997). Our research suggests that the theological motivations for, and the organizational forms of, faith community service activities are varied and complex (Wittberg, 2006; Unruh and Sider 2005). Only a few comparisons of these variations across religions exist (Schneider, Day, Anderson 2006, Bane, Coffin and Higgins 2005; Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000, Foley and Hoge 2007), and most of these focus primarily on Christian denominations.

The present paper compares the ways that various faiths ensure that the organizations they have founded maintain the practical theology of their respective religions, and the major differences in their strategies for guiding and supporting their organizations. Each faith tradition is motivated by its practical theology, and we will first define key aspects of this theology for each faith community. Next, we examine how this theology influences the ways the faith community maintains connections with its religious, health care, and social service organizations. The concluding section will suggest issues for further research, and will suggest educational responses for faith communities and divinity schools.

Data and Methods

The current paper draws from an in-depth study conducted by the Faith and Organizations project (Schneider et al. 2009, Schneider and Morrison 2010). This study was funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. with research activities beginning in March 2008. It examined the relationship between 81 faith communities located in the Northeast (from Philadelphia to Northern Virginia),

Midwest (Ohio and Chicago) and South (South Carolina), and the organizations they founded. An earlier pilot study of 11 faith-based organizations was conducted between 2004 and 2006 in Philadelphia and greater Washington Metropolitan area.¹ Both studies focused primarily on the role of the founding faiths in shaping FBO governance, organizational structures, and relationships with program participants. Also considered was the role these FBOs play in their wider sector, and their connections with government. The studies included organizations providing social services, youth development, senior services, emergency assistance, community development, and health care, under the aegis of Mainline Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Evangelicals, Peace churches (Mennonites and Quakers), African American churches, and Muslims. The in-depth study also included religious schools. One of the Evangelical and one of the Mainline Protestant organizations had been founded by Asians, but both were now connected to faith communities that included whites and African Americans as well.

The project compared strategies used by the various denominations for guiding, supporting and maintaining connections with their nonprofit organizations. Depending on the religion or denomination, these guidance and support activities were carried out primarily by congregations, by higher level judicatories like Jewish Federations, a Catholic diocese, or a Quaker Yearly Meeting, by intermediary organizations such as Friends Services for the Aging or a Catholic health care system, or by a combination of any of these institutions.

We focused on pairs of institutions – for example, a congregation and the school that it had founded. In some cases, a single faith community founded several organizations. For example, a large, several-hundred-year-old Quaker Meeting had founded a retirement community, a senior services organization, and a school, and was also a key member of an interfaith community development corporation. We also included several interfaith organizations that were sponsored by as many as 30 individual congregations. “Interfaith” in this context usually meant sponsorship from

a variety of Mainline Protestant denominations, sometimes with one Catholic parish or Quaker Meeting added to the mix. However, several interfaith organizations had expanded to include Jews, Muslims, and secular community groups as supporters as well. In most cases, the practical theology and primary support system of the interfaiths came from a small number of particularly active Mainline Protestant congregations or a combination of Mainline Protestants and Catholics, so in these organizations we concentrated on connections to the most active congregations.

Jewish and Catholic communities, through various umbrella institutions such as the Federation, a religious order, or a diocese, were responsible for a full range of organizations, and we chose two or three institutions under each of those denominational umbrellas for intensive study. To understand the nature of these relationships, we focused on how they were enacted at several different levels. For example, our research on order-sponsored Catholic hospitals included research on the regional office of one order, the national health system that oversaw all of its hospitals plus those of several other orders, and a single hospital located under this umbrella in Baltimore. The study looked at the faith community's understanding of its overall sponsorship role and the types of organizations it considered to be affiliated with it, as well as at the specific relationships between each faith community and selected organizations.

Both the pilot study and the later in-depth research relied on a combination of several qualitative methods:

- **Writing an overview history of each faith community's stewardship of its organizations and ministries, and a history of the relationship between the faith community and specific selected organizations.** Histories were developed using existing histories of the organization or faith community, a review of documents related to stewardship (e.g., archived minutes of meetings, religious statements, statements of justice and charity activities, or other documents relating to the guidance of the organizations), and interviews with people knowledgeable about

the history of the faith community or the organization.

- **In-Depth interviews with current and former key individuals from both the faith communities and organizations.** This enabled us better to understand the nature of current stewardship activities.
- **Participant observation in faith community stewardship activities and selected organization events related to faith community stewardship.** Project researchers attended numerous faith community and organization activities, and sat in on meetings relevant to maintaining connections to the organization. These activities and meetings varied by faith tradition and included faith community committee meetings, presentations by selected organizations to the faith community, organization board meetings, annual meetings, and events for the larger community. Other participant observation opportunities involved infrequent activities (e.g. an annual presentation at a Yearly Meeting or Synod conference, an annual Christmas party, or an organization festival honoring volunteers), quarterly committee meetings or monthly board meetings. In addition to observing meetings and events, our staff participated in weatherization days, summer arts programs, and other direct service volunteer activities where relevant. While observing, researchers also talked with participants about how they had learned of the organization or event, their thoughts on the organization, and key faith-related reasons for being involved with the organization.
- **Analysis of recent and ongoing written materials produced by the faith community and selected organizations.** These included board and committee minutes, outreach and recruitment materials, theological materials related to charity and justice activities, and other similar documents.

One of the products of the study was a combination qualitative and quantitative self-assessment tool for both faith communities and organizations to use. After the first phase of the in-

depth study, therefore, the second phase also involved testing this self-assessment instrument in additional FBOs and Faith Communities in the South, Midwest and East Coast. The present paper includes data from several Midwest and northeast sites from this second phase of the study.

These various data were drawn together and used to 1) develop comprehensive pictures of each organization/faith community relationship, and 2) provide comparative material for general analysis. We used several standard ethnographic analysis techniques to understand our findings (see Schneider 2006b), including creating keyword-based analysis runs using the DTsearch program (<http://dtsearch.com/>).

Defining “Practical Theology” and “Stewardship”

Our approach to practical theology is more anthropological than theological. We recognize that, particularly among Mainline Protestants, “practical theology” is an independent discipline generating much debate regarding its meaning and applications (Root 2006, Frank 2006, Calahan 2005). As Frank (2006) notes, a “practical theology” of administration focuses primarily on the clergy and borrows heavily from the latest trends in secular business models. As such, it provides little guidance to the lay people who are most often comprise the managers and board members of faith-based organizations. While the Jewish community and some Catholic religious orders provide extensive leadership training for their lay leaders, critics note that, in Jewish FBOs at least, this training most often combines study of religious texts with the latest business models on leadership, with few connections between the two topics (Brown 2007; Lewis 2004). All of these writers suggest that clergy and lay faith community leaders, as well as key leaders of the faith-based organizations themselves, need guidance on practical theology that combines theology with management, stewardship, and guidance advice specific for faith-based organizations.

Given our training in the social sciences, we hoped to provide materials to achieve this goal. Instead of contributing to the theological debate, we focused on observing the day-to-day practices

and the expressions of theology and religious culture that nonprofits and their supporting faith communities displayed in their interactions with each other. As such, our working definition of practical theology is:

The formal and informal mechanisms a faith community uses to enact its theological teachings through its religious culture and structures.

Practical theology changes over time and varies across regions as well as among religions and denominations. Sometimes practical theology varies among faith communities within the same denomination. Practical theology includes explicit evidence of faith such as quoting theological statements or scripture, displaying religious symbols, and employing religious-based practices in governance. More often, however, practical theology is less overt, embedded in the culture of FBOs, and in the particular nature of the relationship between faith communities and the organizations they have created.

Our research reveals that all faith communities feel responsible for ensuring that their current practical theology was followed by their FBOs. In contrast to recent discussions that define “stewardship” primarily as providing and managing funds for an organization (Andrews 1989, Bonner 2003, Conway 1992 and 1995, Scott 2003, Wilmer 1995), most of the faith communities we studied define it in the much broader sense of providing oversight, guidance, and resources. Therefore, we returned to older formulations to define stewardship as *the faith community’s efforts to maintain its practical theology of justice and charity in the activities of the nonprofits affiliated with that religion or denomination* (similar to Jeavons 1994b). A faith community’s willingness to provide resources to its organizations depended to great degree on whether or not the organizations exhibited a practical theology which the faith community judged to be valid and appropriate.

We discovered that the social capital developed through networks of individuals and organizations proved essential in maintaining faith traditions and supporting FBOs. Social capital

refers to *networks of organizations or individuals, based on reciprocal, enforceable trust, which organizations or individuals use to access resources* (Schneider 2009). All faith based organizations used *bonding social capital*, or ties among members of the same congregation or denomination, as a core strategy to support their organization (Putnam 2000). In addition, mainline Protestants in particular used *bridging social capital* – trust based relationships across groups with different characteristics (Putnam and Feldstein 2003) – as a key resource. Other faith traditions also used bridging social capital, albeit to a lesser degree. *Linking social capital* – trust-based relationships between organizations at different levels of a power hierarchy (World Bank 2001) – was particularly important for Catholic and Jewish organizations because of their strong ties to centralized religious institutions, but it was equally important for any organization receiving government funding.

A Typology of Stewardship Systems

A study of the practical theology for each religious tradition reveals unique strategies and similarities. These commonalities and differences played out in each religious tradition's relationship with its FBOs. While we found unique strategies for each denomination and religion, we also found internal commonalities that led us to create a typology of three stewardship systems. Identifying these systems is important because the best practices, weaknesses, and logic behind non-profit activity are specific to each system. While organizations coming from one system could adapt some approaches from another system for their use, wholesale attempts to use strategies appropriate for another system are unlikely to work because they run counter to the cultural and theological logic which supports the founding relationship between faith community and organization.

In **Congregational Systems**, the local congregations are the central organizing force for justice and charity work, with specific ministries arising from the individual or corporate calls for service that the congregations then support. Ministries or programs such as a church food pantry may begin as efforts within a congregation, but they usually become institutionalized as independent or

semi-independent non-profits with separate 501c3 status and/or independent advisory committees and separate bank accounts. In this study, Mainline Protestants, some African American churches, and “Peace Churches” such as the Quakers and Mennonites fell into the congregational system. Some Evangelical groups use this system as well.

The theology behind congregational systems comes out of the Protestant reformation and the religious movements that created the Peace Churches. This religious tradition emphasizes the local congregation as the primary vehicle for carrying out the service mandates of faith in a community, although congregations may be supported in this task by centralized denominational structures. Well-established FBOs maintain strong ties to congregations, or at least retain vestiges of these congregational roots through board appointments and other mechanisms.

The major features of Congregational systems are:

- Their ministries often formalize either as independent programs of their founding congregation(s) with independent advisory committees and separate accounting systems, or as independent 501c3 organizations with limited ties to their original congregation. Some form as interfaith entities.
- The organizations maintain ties to one or more congregations through board appointments, appeals for resources, volunteers and in-kind supports.
- Most see volunteering as an important component of organizational activity, and create volunteer opportunities for people from their congregation(s).
- Established congregational FBOs usually maintain ties to their founding faith by requiring that a percentage of board members be from the founding faith or founding congregations.
- In some cases, the relationship between congregational FBOs and their founding faith communities results in volunteers from outside the sponsoring congregation and people served by the organization being drawn to congregational membership.

- Congregational system FBOs from Mainline Protestant and Quaker traditions often embed their faith in more general values, with many specifically stating that they value theological diversity within a general spiritual or Christian context. On principle they do not proselytize.
- Congregational system denominations create fewer umbrella organizations such as professional associations for their FBOs, and the FBOs tend to belong to fewer umbrella groups.

Network Systems transcend congregations, drawing together people through either the social networks of the founders or the institutional/virtual networks of people with a similar faith-based vision. Network-based FBOs may be connected with one or multiple congregations, but their decision-making and support systems reside outside the congregational system. FBOs in network systems differ from those in congregational systems in two important ways: 1) the ministry is supported by a network of individuals focused on a specific ministry and 2) the people who work in these FBOs, either as volunteers or paid staff, share the faith approach of the organization's founders and use this faith as a prime motivator in their work. In contrast, congregational organizations draw staff and volunteers who are interested in the service or ministry of the program, but who do not necessarily share similar approaches to faith or come from the religion of the founding congregation(s). The network-based FBOs in this study ranged from small emergency assistance programs founded by a single person to a multi-site pregnancy center working to prevent abortions, and from a recently-founded evangelical Christian school to a nearly 200- year-old multi-service organization. Major features of network systems are:

- The FBOs frequently become a faith community for their staff, active volunteers, and sometimes program participants, transcending any particular congregation.

- These FBOs rely on a combination of staff and volunteers, but almost all those involved with the organization share its founding faith or have some other personal connection with the ministry. Their involvement is primarily motivated by that faith.
- Resources come through networks of like-minded believers, and often FBOs highlight their faith or trust in God as a source for resources for the organization.
- Since these FBOs are supported through personal networks, they are more likely to end when the pastor or founder moves on. In older, established FBOs, ministries can change as the leader's calling or gospel vision changes.
- One main subset of this group comprises evangelistic FBOs, for whom sharing their faith is a key element of the ministry.

Institutionalized Systems organize and centralize supports at the area-wide level, with theological expectations that the entire faith community in that area is responsible for those in need. This obligation may be conceived as applying either to members of that religion exclusively or to the whole world. Jews and Catholics use this system, though they differ in their structure. Catholic systems are integrated into either a diocese or religious order, sometimes via a local parish. Jewish systems centralize all social and health services through Federations, with the synagogues remaining independent from the system. Major features of Institutionalized systems are:

- They centralize fundraising, volunteer recruitment, training and sometimes facilities management.
- They have a strong tradition of planning at a centralized level for the community or its institutions as a whole.
- Centralized bodies occasionally encourage or force mergers or collaborations among organizations in the community for the greater good of the systems as a whole.
- They have the ability to share resources across the system.

- They develop strong networks of religiously-based, national umbrella associations, in addition to local centralized systems that also provide additional support and networks.
- There is a tendency for FBOs outside of the centralized umbrella nevertheless to develop ties with other organizations in the faith. Elementary schools are connected with the wider faith community and the centralized umbrella (Federation, order, or diocese), but most are also under the direct sponsorship of a local congregation.

Within these three systems, each religion or denomination had unique approaches based on their diverse practical theologies. The various Mainline Protestant, Evangelical and African American denominations had the most diversity, and present numerous difficulties in identifying common elements (Chaves 2004, Cnaan et al 2002, Ammerman 2005, Wuthnow 2004, Lincoln and Mamiya 1990, Day 2002, McRoberts 2003). Our discussions of these traditions are therefore the most generalized. A full discussion of practical theology for each religion is available in our education report and companion volume on specific religions (Schneider et al 2009, Schneider and Morrison 2010).

The Organizational Implications of Practical Theologies: Congregational Systems

Congregational system denominations all share an emphasis on individual congregations as a source for support, and display some of the same strengths and weaknesses. However, variations in practical theology lead to slight differences in approach among each denominational group.

Mainline Protestants

Mainline Protestants emphasize that tangible demonstrations of God's care for the poor and vulnerable are an expression of spirituality. Serving others is an act of obedience to God. These themes reflect the ongoing influence of the Social Gospel movement of the early twentieth century, which called Christians to advocate for social justice and reach out to the poor as a central tenet of their faith. Mainline Protestant practical theology also draws on traditional notion of faithful

individuals providing charity to those in need, often citing the parable of the Good Samaritan. While there is significant diversity among the various denominations represented in Mainline Protestantism, and among the churches within each denomination, a number of studies have documented their common "this-worldly" orientation and active public presence (Chaves, Giesel and Tsitsos 2005, 122-123, Ammerman 2005).

This underlying practical theology has resulted in significant similarities for the way most of the faith communities involved in this study relate to their social service ministries. In most cases, local congregations – individually or in groups – founded FBOs.² Most often, an active individual in a church would feel called to develop a particular ministry. For instance, one woman in a Disciples of Christ church decided that intergroup relations in the area surrounding the church could be improved through a church-sponsored summer arts program. She brought this idea to the pastor and others in the church, who agreed that it would be a good project. This individual, along with an advisory committee from the church, developed the program, found outside funding and experts to teach the children, and carried on the program as a project of the church for ten years. Congregation members volunteer in the program and their children attend it. In other cases, projects were developed by interfaith organizations of pastors, which then either ran these projects as an activity of the interfaith or spun them off as separate 501c3 organizations. Our study included several organizations that fit this model.

Mainline Protestant FBOs thus see these congregations as primarily responsible for their governance and support. The congregations are most likely to fulfill this responsibility by providing board members, financial and in-kind support, and volunteers to their FBO. Most administrative issues are considered the province of local clergy, and Mainline Protestant FBOs were likely to contact clergy when seeking support (Frank 2006). For example, a recently hired outreach director for one Mainline Protestant sponsored organization commented:

I have visited about five pastors and five churches; I have not seen all thirteen yet. The idea is for me to visit singularly each pastor and representative on a separate day to just express our challenges, what we've seen this year, to share the numbers of last year and to see where they are, too.

Like many Mainline Protestant organizations, this particular FBO is sponsored by an interfaith coalition that includes Mainline Protestant congregations from several denominations in a particular community. Pastors played a key role in initiating the relationship, by appointing board members, encouraging donations to the organization, and providing a theological context for people interested in volunteering. However, once the pastors appointed the board, it behaved relatively independently of the church. We found few formal reporting mechanisms for board members to provide updates on their stewardship of the organization back to their congregations.

The same was true for volunteers. Volunteers garnered through individual congregations were an important component of service activities for all Mainline Protestant FBOs, even those as staff-driven and established as the national Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services office in our study. An important component of Mainline Protestant practical theology is that volunteering in these organizations is seen as an opportunity to practice one's faith. Volunteers often became an important force in both maintaining relationships to the sponsoring faith community, and in ensuring that the organization's culture reflects its practical theology. But little effort is made by the sponsoring faith communities to train or monitor these volunteers in this practical theology.

While Mainline Protestant ministries can usually identify a general theological rationale for their activities, this faith base is often hidden in the actual work of supporting the organization. For example, those involved with the neighborhood arts program mentioned above would more often talk about the mechanics of fundraising than about the underlying religious goal of the FBO. The same was true for most other programs, even those where pastors served as the primary links between non-profit and faith community.

African American Churches

The African American churches in our study included both Mainline Protestant and Evangelical congregations. However, while many African American faith communities profess a traditional evangelical theology regarding areas such as Scripture, personal salvation, and the centrality of Jesus Christ, they tend to relate this faith to their understanding of society and their practice of the social mission of the church differently than white Evangelicals do (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990, McRoberts 2003). An example of this culture can be seen in the relationship between one inner city church in this study and its African American pastor. This church has a long history of political activism in the community and continues to attempt to influence city council elections and state politics. The church also sponsors a Head Start program, which is largely fee-for-service and federally funded. The pastor attempts to blend together the Holy Spirit, political activism and social services. This combination energizes his church as they continue to reach out.

A second difference is the relative importance of the pastor in African American congregations. In contrast to Mainline Protestant initiatives, most African American church ministries were pastor-led and dominated, with key congregation members serving in supporting administrative and staff roles. As such, support for a program could quickly disappear when a new pastor took over the church. In some cases, however, other clergy would step in to continue an orphaned ministry. One organization in our study is now sponsored by a coalition of African American churches. This tendency for organizations to remain closely tied to their founding congregation, with the pastor playing a key leadership role, is similar to the findings of previous studies of African American FBOs (Day 2002, Unruh and Sider 2005, Ammerman 2005).

Unlike white-dominated congregations, African American churches maintain close ties with their organizations, often keeping them under the 501c3 umbrella of the church instead of spinning them off as independent entities. For example, Cookman United Methodist retains its welfare-to-work ministry under the care of the congregation. In other cases, FBOs are nominally independent

but the church pastor continues to play a key role. A charter school sponsored by one large African American church had incorporated separately, but the church pastor was chair of the board and CEO for the ministry.

Given the close ties between faith community and organization, governance is often under the control of the pastor or the church. We saw some organizations that had independent boards drawn from the local African American community beyond a particular congregation, but an equal number where the boards or advisory committees were appointed by the pastors and primarily consisted of church elders. The staff employed in key roles in the schools, Head Start, or health ministries had the requisite professional qualifications, but were expected to share the political approach and practical theology of the FBO. As with other staff and volunteers, they were often drawn from the founding congregations or local African American community.

Quakers

Friends believe that each individual - regardless of whether s/he is a member of the Religious Society of Friends or any other religion - contains the light of God within him- or herself. Participants in Quaker worship wait in silence for divine messages. Occasionally prompted to speak by the Spirit, any participant can rise to give a message. Worship thus consists of the voice of the Spirit flowing through people engaged in the community of worship. In present-day Meetings, anyone can come to worship and everyone technically has equal right to speak. Quaker practice is largely learned by socialization, which leads to wide variation in interpretation and implementation.

The key testimonies that make up practical theology of Quakers - simplicity, non-violence, equality, integrity, and seeking that of God in the individual - have many different interpretations, which are reflected in the FBOs they have founded (Brinton 1994). For example, staff and program participants at all levels are encouraged to contribute to organizational decision-making. Non-violence may be manifested as efforts toward conflict resolution in agency processes or governance.

Sometimes, non-violence translates into fear of conflict, which can lead a board to stalemates over difficult decisions or allow more assertive members to control. Seeking God in the individual can lead to an emphasis in finding the good in everyone or an emphasis on providing for each individual.

The practice of encouraging the participation of everyone involved is a hallmark of Quaker organizations. For example, one school involved students, parents and staff in decisions related to its new diversity policy. The retirement communities had committees of residents who were active in supporting the institution, developing activities, and recommending policy. In contrast, the FBOs' use of Quaker *worship* in their activities varied significantly. The schools and most of the retirement communities regularly sponsored Quaker services. Quaker practice in staff or participant activities was less common in the social service agencies.

As a congregational system denomination, the structure of Quaker FBOs has much in common with that of Mainline Protestants, but specific characteristics of Quaker practical theology have resulted in several significant differences. Members that feel called to develop a ministry bring their project to their Monthly meeting for discernment and support. Many Quaker organizations evolved out of either individual "leadings" or Meeting-wide discernment that the community should engage in a particular service. For example, this study included a crime victims' services organization which started when a state agency approached the Meeting and asked if they would consider developing a program to offer crime victims' services. A Meeting member decided that this opportunity was "leading" her to put her concern for restorative justice into practice. These social concerns are tested by Quaker Meetings and supported either by that individual Meeting or by larger structures like Quarterly or Yearly Meetings. While this practice of discernment is described in a number of Quaker documents on leadings (Lacey 1985), in practice the role of a Meeting in discernment varies widely.

The Quaker FBOs in this study had a variety of relationships with parts of the Religious

Society of Friends. The majority were started by one Meeting and were either still under the spiritual care of that Meeting or of several Meetings in the vicinity. Others were under the spiritual care of a higher level adjudicatory.³ Being under the care of a Meeting or Meetings usually means that these Faith Communities appoint a percentage of board members, expect annual reports from the organization on their continuing ability to follow Quaker practice, and perhaps provide some financial support, in-kind resources, and volunteers. Organizations under the care of a Quarterly or Yearly Meeting have a larger pool of individuals to draw from for board appointments, and possibly greater range for fundraising.

The primary way that Quakers maintained connections to their FBOs was board appointments. Most organizations had by-laws stipulating that a majority of board members should be Quaker. Mechanisms for appointing boards varied from the sponsoring Meetings or higher level judicatories appointing members, to appointments through various regional bodies, to independent nominating committees. While these board appointments provided an important link between the organization and its founding faith community, the Meetings and Yearly Meetings often provided no guidance either on how those board members should report back to the sponsoring religious body, or on their responsibilities as board members. In general, we found that strong FBOs tended to have little trouble receiving appropriate board appointments. However, organizations with less stellar reputations had more trouble, and reports of meddling or inappropriate board members occurred. In addition, Meetings overseeing several organizations or communities with a limited number of Friends reported continuing board recruitment problems. As one organization leader commented, “there isn't the volume of Quakers to easily fill all of the Quaker board positions in Quaker organizations.”

Beyond board appointments, FBO by-laws sometimes stipulated Quaker practice, and mission statements often stressed the Quaker roots of organizations. Here again, board leaders had a strong role in implementing Quaker practice at the board level. For example, one experienced Friend

introduced “Quaker Queries” at the beginning of every board meeting. Queries are questions that ask people to think about how they approach a particular issue in worship and are useful in an organization without a creed.

While board appointments were the primary formal mechanism for stewardship, informal networks and interactions with the organization proved the most effective way that Quaker FBOs maintained ties with their founding faith. Active boards and volunteers played a similar significant role in all organizations. Where this social capital was attenuated or missing, organizations frequently lost touch with their founding Meeting. Some Quaker FBOs have either spun off from Meeting control or were formed independently from a specific Meeting. The crime victims’ services organization had become independent ten years prior to our study, and no longer specified that Friends needed to remain on its board. While it had some ties to its founding Meeting through its founding executive director, as she moved toward retirement near the end of the study, it was likely to lose its ties with Quakers altogether.

Organizational Implications of Practical Theologies: Network Systems

Unlike congregational or institutional systems, network system FBOs are not specifically connected to a congregation or other denominational body, but rely instead on networks of like-minded individuals. While we recognize that network organizations can, and do, emerge in any religion, all of the network system examples in this study had Evangelical roots. We also had several hybrid organizations: a Missouri synod-dominated Lutheran FBO that shared characteristics of both Congregational and Network systems and two FBOs founded by Catholic lay persons that largely behaved as Network organizations but had some Institutional systems ties and resources as well.

Network organizations rely on strong bonding social capital through the diverse networks that support their FBOs. Boards tend to be more informal than in the other two systems, and budgets less transparent. Since people are drawn to the FBO because it represents their faith, these organizations

tend to suffuse religion through all aspects of their operation. This includes mission statements clearly tied to their theology, staff and volunteers that share the same beliefs and incorporate worship into their activities together, and program elements that come out of their practical theology. Organizations that no longer embody the theology of the network potentially could quickly lose support.

This is true even for FBOs that do not explicitly share their faith with program participants. For example, Pregnancy Help Center uses sophisticated ultrasounds and other medical technology to show a woman the life within her. Counseling supports a right to life message, but staff do not share their faith with clients unless they are given an opening to do so. The board of the Pregnancy Help Center has no denominational requirements, but all members have the same theological and social views.

Network FBOs are often started by a charismatic leader, be it a pastor or a key lay founder. The networks that support the organization are often the personal networks of the key individuals involved. As a result, network FBOs tend to be fragile, with the danger of closing or changing significantly as leadership moves on. Volunteers and funds are drawn from a virtual network of concerned individuals, who regularly hold fundraisers and awareness campaigns. Increasingly, these FBOs are run by college educated Christians savvy in organizational management and sophisticated internet based networking.

Evangelicals:

With 40 million adherents, Evangelicals are the second largest religious group in the United States; conservative Protestant churches account for about half of all American congregations (Ammerman 2005). Evangelicals represent a movement within Christianity that shares a set of key beliefs, chiefly relating to the centrality and authority of Scripture, the call to personal salvation through faith in Christ, and the mandate to share the faith with others. Pentecostal/Charismatic

Christianity shares many of these same core doctrinal beliefs, with an additional emphasis on the dynamic role of the Holy Spirit in directing the spiritual life and behavior of Christians.

While encouraging others to experience personal salvation is a core Evangelical value (Ammerman 2005, Unruh and Sider 2005), there is a wide range of strategies for achieving this goal. Some Evangelicals regard evangelism as their primary mandate and view social service either as a distraction from that priority, or as merely one means to achieving it. Other evangelicals seek a “holistic” approach, pursuing both evangelism and social action as equally valid, Scripturally-based, practices. In some cases, evangelism and social action may be pursued as separately-organized outreach initiatives; in other cases, the ministry may regard humanitarian service as incomplete if the person being served is not invited to share in the faith of the social ministry sponsors and/or to join the sponsoring worship community. One example is the Blessing Room at Chesapeake Christian Center (Church of God), which provides free clothing and a food pantry for the poor, while also encouraging clients who come for services to give their lives to Christ.

We found that the Evangelicals in our study might use either congregational or network approaches to maintain their practical theology and support their FBOs. Some ministries were founded in one congregation, run with the permission of the pastor, and supported by volunteers within that congregation. The Blessing Room is one example of this trend. On the other hand, the study also included several evangelical FBOs – a crisis pregnancy center and an urban ministry project – that were independent of any particular congregation. These FBOs drew together networks of Evangelicals devoted to this particular ministry. Drawing supporters through individual networks, outreach to congregations interested in this cause, and electronic media like websites, blogs and listservs, they developed thriving organizations with few institutional ties to particular congregations. For network organizations, congregations participated because their members were involved; the FBO was rarely a project of the congregation per se.

The operation of the network system FBOs in our study is based on Evangelical practical theology, which stems from the belief in a divine calling and that God will intervene to insure the work's success. Evangelical FBOs therefore frequently reference concepts such as divine "appointment" and "intervention." This is the most prevalent when it comes to attaining resources and additional staff members. Prayer is often heavily relied upon in all important decision-making, whether that decision is about hiring a new staff person or deciding how to move forward with a particular project. Thus, the connections between the faith of the founding community occurs more through a pervasive culture and less through any specific training.

The theology of both organizations in this study is centered on the Bible; however the interpretation varies within different organizations. The importance of a relationship with Jesus is emphasized above any denominational doctrine. A common evangelical theology that recognizes Jesus as an incarnation of God, and the inerrancy of the Bible is the common thread.

The success of these organizations is understood within their community of supporters as measured by the relationships that are formed and the effect that the work has on the lives of the clients served. Primary strategies to garner continued support often include testimonials by people helped by the organization or success stories. FBOs live out their Christian witness through actions; whether through advocating for the poor, leading a Bible study, mentoring young women in crisis pregnancies, or other ways to meet the needs of the community. Organizations that successfully conveyed this connection between faith and works drew increasing support, leading to vital and growing organizations. However, this focus exposes the leadership of network FBOs to the danger of being so caught up in their evangelical calling that they may fail to ask hard questions about the actual effectiveness of their stewardship.

Organizational Implications of Practical Theologies: Institutional Systems

. Institutional system religions share two primary traits: 1) theology that the entire faith

community is responsible for meeting needs and 2) centralized institutions responsible for planning, leadership development, and, to a lesser degree, fundraising, volunteer management and other forms of support for their FBOs. The ethos of communal support is the core hallmark of these pre-Protestant Reformation religions. While not reported here, we saw similar strategies among Muslim organizations in our pilot study. Within this general framework, however, each religion had unique strategies that reflected its beliefs and practices.

Catholics

In Catholic theology, the idea that one would save one's own soul by tending the needs of the poor and the sick has its roots in the "Last Judgment" scene of Matthew 25 – "Whatsoever you did to the least of my brothers, you did to me." As one interviewee put it (quoting the Epistle of James), "not to meet the bodily needs of the poor is to show that one's faith, one's religion, is actually dead." Catholic involvement in healing and helping the poor thus goes back literally to the foundation of Christianity. In previous centuries, and among some religious orders even today,⁴ the sick and the poor have been considered literally to be Jesus Christ. Education as a spiritual task came somewhat later, around the time of the Reformation (Wittberg 2006: 36-41).

For Catholics, the primary responsibility of caring for those in need is an obligation of the church as a whole. The Second Vatican Council document on "The Church in the Modern World" (*Gaudium et Spes*) urged all Catholics to become active in addressing the most pressing social needs. Together, these Council documents, and several Papal Encyclicals dating back to Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* in 1891, came to be cited collectively as Catholic Social Justice Teaching, and local bishops encouraged their flocks to study and act upon them.

Catholic educational, health care, and social service organizations are typically connected to their sponsoring denomination via one of two routes: they are either directly owned and supervised by a diocese or parish, or else they are owned and/or sponsored by a religious order. For

organizations which are part of Catholic Charities, ties to the local diocese are very clear. For example, a key staff person described its board structure as follows:

We have a two-tiered structure. We have a board of directors that govern the operation of [the agency]. [The second tier is] the corporate members who have the reserve powers. So for example, it is the corporate members who elect the board of directors. It is the corporate members who approve the appointment of the CEO. It is the corporate members who approve the purchase or sale of real property. It is the corporate members only who can change the bylaws and articles of incorporation. They are fundamentally very powerful - and the corporate members that ensure the Catholic identity and Catholic connection remains the same. [The agency] recommends candidates for appointments by the corporate members. The corporate members change according to the administration of the archdiocese, but presently they are the archbishop, the chancellor and ... one of the priests that is in charge of the secretariat.

The diocese's role in Catholic Charities went beyond appointing board members. Fundraising was centralized through the Bishop's Appeal, volunteer banks were maintained at a diocesan level, and policy came down to organizations from the sponsoring diocese.

Parish schools represent a dual level of connection. They are under the direct authority of the local pastor, sometimes assisted by a locally-elected school board. However, the diocese has authority to close schools, set curriculum, and determine other matters of policy. While parish schools have independent volunteer and fundraising bases, dioceses often supply additional funds to poorer parishes. Like Catholic Charities, therefore, the parish schools are considered "part of the Church," as one key leader put it.

In contrast, the relationship between the religious order FBOs and their sponsors is currently in flux. Like Catholic Charities organizations, most of the orders' institutions have two-tiered boards: a top tier consisting of officials of the order, and an operating board that oversee the day-to-day operations of the agency. Most of the order-sponsored FBOs have become separately incorporated in recent decades, while retaining some sort of "sponsorship" relationship to the founding order. However, it is often unclear exactly what this sponsorship relation actually means in practice, although some orders, such as the School Sisters of Notre Dame in our study who sponsor Baltimore's Caroline Center, have devised carefully thought-out programs to maintain their

relationship. The hospital we studied is part of a national health care system, and is no longer subject either to its founding religious order or to the diocese – although a few members of the founding order still sit on both the hospital and the system board. As the membership of the sponsoring religious orders continues to decline, their FBOs must decide whether/how to remain related to the Catholic faith community in the absence of their former connection to the orders. In most of the FBOs we studied, our interviewees lamented the loss of the sisters', brothers', and priests' presence. Interviewees at all of the parish grade schools and high schools we studied, as well as at the hospital, mentioned this. Social Service FBOs founded by religious orders of nuns who still served as staff and administrators, worried what they would do when the current sisters retired. The national health system is preparing for this eventuality by obtaining "public juridic person" status under Canon Law – being recognized as the official Catholic sponsor of its component hospitals in place of the religious orders which had originally founded and staffed them.

Many Catholic social service institutions, and some of the order-sponsored high schools, tend to deemphasize the explicit symbols of their religious identity in their day-to-day activities. This was originally prompted by their increased reliance on government funding. Religious displays or activities in government-funded programs were believed, rightly or wrongly, to be forbidden. Since the Bush administration's Faith-Based Initiative, however, many Catholic social service agencies have become more open regarding their religious mission, but they still seldom mention it to their clients, possibly to avoid offending the non-Catholics among them. Even at one of the two high schools in our study, where the student body is between 70% and 80% Catholic, an interviewee said "It is not a school whose foundation is oriented toward evangelization . . . I think during the course of their time with us, people find their own faith traditions stimulated so they find out more about their faith. . . But we are very comfortable in helping people to come to understand their own faith tradition better – to become more faithful persons within the context of their own faith." The two

parish grade schools in our study, on the other hand, were more explicit in affirming their Catholic identity. Parish grade schools with larger proportions of non-Catholic students, however, may not emphasize Catholicism as strongly.

Jews

Judaism differs from other religions in that it is both a religion and an ethnic group, with Jewish communities striving to include unaffiliated Jews who do not belong to a synagogue or participate in Jewish communal life. The practical theology behind Jewish organizations is widely understood by both secular and various kinds of religious Jews. To quote one community leader:

All Jews are responsible for one another. So that's our basic concept. We believe that a strong Jewish community is a positive influence spiritually on the whole world. So by building strong Jewish communities we're helping to contribute to the betterment of the whole world.

The Jewish theology of support for those in need, charity, and justice comes from a combination of the Torah and the Talmud, and is reinterpreted regularly in Jewish communities and their institutions. In Jewish thinking, justice and charity are merged in dual concepts. Three key concepts embody Jewish philosophy on social welfare: *tikkun olam* (to heal the world) *chesed* (loving kindness) and *tzedakah*. While the Hebrew *tzedakah* roughly translates as charity, the concept more accurately combines charity, justice, and righteous duty.

These precepts are taught in a variety of ways – in the home through modeling and sometimes religious practice, in synagogues or Temples, at community centers like the Jewish Community Centers, in various youth programs and other organized groups like B'nai Brith or the Jewish women's organization Hadassah, and finally by the Federations. National umbrella groups and professional organizations, as well as the umbrella group for the Federation itself, also provide educational materials, guidelines, leadership training programs, and networking opportunities.

Synagogues and Temples are largely independent from each other, loosely affiliated through conferences associated with particular theological leanings (Modern Orthodox, Conservative,

Reform, Reconstructionist, Traditional Orthodox, etc.). In contrast, Jewish social welfare, health, community development and, to a large degree, educational initiatives are organized communally. Since the early twentieth century, Jews in the United States have formed Federations which serve as central planning, fundraising and support institutions that bridge the various theological divisions (Bernstein 1984, Bogan 1917, Carp 2002). While relatively non-hierarchical in nature, these Federations nevertheless serve as centralized bodies to support and maintain Jewish practical theology among their member organizations and other institutions in the local community. Generally, many of the social service and health entities in a particular locality belong to the Federation, while schools and some other institutions remain independent but receive such supports as centralized Jewish leadership education and curriculum materials, funding and research/planning services. Planning is particularly important in Jewish communities – decisions to start, consolidate or close agencies often comes as much from Federation-led planning as from independent boards.

Relationships between the Jewish community and their FBOs involve several intertwined mechanisms: training leaders on boards, centralized fundraising, and ongoing Jewish educational programs, as well as some centralization of back office needs like insurance, payroll, centralized volunteer banks, and sometimes property management. Staff and lay leaders tend to work together as partners, and lay leaders often circulate between agencies and lay committees in the local federation. As such, they exhibit strong bonding social capital among those involved in Federation and its organizations.

Over time, Federations have played an increasing role in creating Jewish leadership, fostering Jewish identity, and managing relationships with the surrounding non-Jewish community. Since the 1950s, several Jewish planning studies have expressed concern over intermarriage rates and low percentages of synagogue membership. As a generally well-educated and affluent group that has largely assimilated into U.S. society, most of the Jewish community both maintains the separate

structures of the ethnic group and participates fully in U.S. socio- economic and political systems. Fostering Jewish community identification in the face of assimilation has increasingly become a goal for Federations' Leadership development programs started in the 1930s, and have become more sophisticated over time (Brown 2007, Lewis 2004; Bernstein 1984: 7). They draw young adults into education and mentoring programs which provide formal training in the practical theology of Jewish social welfare and develop effective board members and volunteers. Both communities in the study also place young leaders first as observers on Jewish boards, and then help place them in initial board appointments. The result is a network of lay leaders trained in board governance, fundraising and the faith base for their service – leaders likely to evolve into the next generation of community leaders.

The same is true for professional staff. Starting in the 1960s, Federations encouraged development of executive leadership certificate programs and graduate degrees in Jewish communal service (Bernstein 1984: 266-269). Like the lay leader programs, these professional programs develop highly trained professionals, with solid understanding of Jewish history and values and strong social networks among themselves. While programs vary and there is some debate regarding objectives, they do serve to create a common pool of professionals schooled in Jewish values and various professional disciplines (Bubis 2005). Professional organizations combine with active involvement in umbrella groups to foster shared practices and employment networks.

Much volunteering in the Jewish community involves participating in boards, advisory committees, and various Federation committees. While some organizations use volunteers to supplement direct service, they play a much less important role than in Congregational or Network system organizations. This is primarily due to the high value placed on professionals. The emphasis on professional or appropriately trained staff comes from Jewish practical theology that high quality service is important in order to fulfill Talmudic mandates to help individuals in need meet their greatest potential.

Summary

Comparing practical theology and stewardship strategies among these religions and denominations reveals both unique beliefs and strategies and striking similarities for each religion. In general we found that the post-Reformation denominations (Mainline Protestants, Quakers, Evangelicals, African American churches) shared much in common both in practical theology and strategies to maintain connections to their founding faiths. Catholics and Jews also had much in common given their emphasis on communal responsibility to provide for those in need. Both saw close connections between justice and charity that were often missing among Mainline Protestants, Evangelicals and some Quakers. We also noted significant differences in practical theology and stewardship strategies for many Evangelical organizations.

Strengths and Weaknesses: Congregational Systems

Each of the three stewardship systems revealed strengths and weaknesses. The strength of congregational systems comes from the fact that Mainline Protestant models have been institutionalized as normative in the United States (Hall 2005). The expectation that organizations should provide non-sectarian services while being supported through board members, volunteers, in-kind supports, and funding from congregations, pervades the literature on faith-based service as well as recent public policy on faith-based organizations (Ammerman 2005, Wuthnow 2004). As such, clear understandings exist about appointing boards, fiscal transparency, and strategies to fundraise.

However, these strengths are also a primary weakness. As Frank (2006) points out, both church and FBO leaders have turned to secular management and stewardship strategies for guidance rather than create faith-based tools appropriate for that denomination. Faith communities often give little thought to board appointments, and seldom provide any guidance to board members once they have been appointed. For example, one key organization staff member commented on the need to develop specific criteria for board members appointed by the representative churches because: “We

want them to be more interested, some of them are just here because they've been chosen by the pastor who said, 'Do you want to do it?,' and as long as it's not too much work."

The other major weakness involves the limited support which congregational system FBOs receive if they are supported by too few congregations, or if the supporting faith community contains primarily lower-income or aging members. Several of the organizations that struggled or closed during our study had these weak congregational support systems. Even visibly successful organizations, particularly interfaiths, needed to expand their network of supporting congregations on a regular basis in order to avoid this problem.

Strengths and Weaknesses: Network Systems

As their primary mechanism for support, the network FBOs in this study drew on the strong bonding social capital of the networks that supported them. Sharing a common set of beliefs, the volunteers and other supporters maintained a clear and enthusiastic chain of support for the organizations. This enthusiasm and shared theology was the true strength of the organization.

However, as organizations change or leaders leave, network FBOs can face periods of crisis. For example, one conservative Christian school initially started as a project of a single congregation. But when its leadership shifted to a slightly less Evangelical practical theology in order to draw more pupils, many of the original founders withdrew and started another school. The original school now depends on a self-perpetuating board of parents who share the school's practical theology. While several of the network FBOs in our study were thriving, we wondered what would happen when aging founders retired.

The other weakness for network organizations lies in the informal nature of boards and the lack of fiscal transparency. While some of the organizations appear to be well-run, they would not withstand the audits necessary for government or private funding unless they revised their current practices. We did not uncover any financial scandals in the network organizations participating in

this study, but stories of fiscal irresponsibility among ministries are not uncommon among these communities or in the local press. As with the other aspects of network organization, the power of strong, closed networks of true believers can prove both a strength and weakness.

Strengths and Weaknesses: Institutional Systems

The true strength of institutionalized systems comes from their centralized planning, evaluation, and leadership development programs. Both religions have thought carefully, for many years, about ways to ensure that people schooled in practical theology and trusted by the local faith community provide the connections with their FBOs. In both religions, close social networks are as important as formal training in decision-making when choosing persons for leadership positions. Both also provide some form of formal training or orientation for people placed in leadership roles. Finally, both benefit from economies of scale through centralized structures for fundraising, volunteers, and back office supports.

A weakness of institutionalized systems involved challenges in clarifying the relationships between the overarching umbrella groups and the organizations outside of them. For Jews, this includes organizations founded independently of the Federation or a synagogue. For example, one community development organization was founded by community members displeased that the Federation chose to ignore the results of a planning study. This organization created networks among people less active in the Federation and, following the lead of many Mainline Protestant and interfaith organizations, drew supporters initially from synagogues, but later from a few churches as well.

The Catholic organizations outside of the local institutionalized structures also come in several forms. Most were founded by lay people independently of the diocese or religious order, but still receive some support from them. One organization had been founded by a former priest, and broke with the archdiocese social service umbrella over issues of control and institutional philosophy.

Another was begun by the independent initiative of a Catholic lay woman, and had never been affiliated with either the local archdiocese or a religious order. In both cases, however, much of these organizations' non-government funding came from Catholics, as did a significant proportion of their volunteers. In addition to these independent organizations, order-sponsored FBOs constantly had to clarify in their outreach to Catholics and their fundraising efforts that they were *not* receiving any funding or other support from the archdiocese.

Conclusion: Implication for Research, Education and Practice

Our findings suggest several new directions for research on faith-based social welfare, health and education initiatives, as well as for theological education regarding ways of infusing practical theology in FBO administration. These findings also have implications for those responsible for maintaining connections between faith communities and their FBOs. First, comparisons across religions show that focusing on congregations as a locus for creating and supporting FBOs is appropriate only for post-Reformation denominations following *congregational* systems (Mainline Protestants, Quakers, African American churches and some Evangelicals). Such a focus misses key sources of support and guidance for FBOs in *institutional* and *network* systems.

For Catholics and Jews, stewardship is managed through diocese, orders or federations, with parishes and synagogues directly responsible only for in-house emergency assistance and schools. Even these local activities usually have some relationship to an outside umbrella – for example, the St. Vincent de Paul Society has chapters in most Catholic parishes to provide emergency assistance, while federations and dioceses provide a supporting role for schools. Ammerman (2005) acknowledges the importance of denominational structures in her work, but her focus on congregations misses much of the role of these centralized institutions for these other religious traditions.

Likewise, support for *network* FBOs is seldom tied directly to congregations, although individual members of numerous congregations might support an organization. For example, the Asian youth organization in our pilot had connections to a number of Asian Evangelical churches and often sought support by preaching in those congregations. However, invitations to seek support came through active members of the network who belonged to the congregation rather than through direct connections to the congregation *qua* congregation or to its pastor. The same was true of the Pregnancy Help Center. For network FBOs, the focus for research should be on key leader personal networks and the virtual networks of supporters drawn to these organizations. One must remain aware of the nuances among evangelicals -particularly within the growing generational and cultural divide. What happens when the original leader steps down? How do evangelical FBOs handle transition? What is the effect of development on FBOs serving in urban communities? How do they cope with clientele who are often pushed out?

Our findings suggest that, particularly for *congregational* and *network* systems, educational materials need to be developed that clarify the practical theology and the stewardship role for independently-incorporated FBOs. Materials need to be created specifically for clergy, lay leaders, and volunteers that can be disseminated through a variety of venues, including divinity schools, social work programs. Other materials need to be created that can be used by individual congregations in workshops or orientation programs. We agree with Frank (2007) and Lewis (2004) that these materials should combine teaching of practical theology with a history of faith-based stewardship of non-profits. Governance, stewardship and administrative advice must be provided, using evidence based practices appropriate for faith based organizations. These tools may include orientation and workshop materials on board roles, developing networks to support organizations, resource stewardship, and reporting or other mechanisms to maintain connections between

sponsoring faith communities and organizations. The Faith and Organizations project plans to prepare some of these materials as part of its current *Maintaining Connections* project.

Finally, we also agree with Frank (2007) and Lewis (2004) that practical theology of stewarding FBOs is best learned through practice. Our findings indicate that Jewish community and some Catholic religious orders and health care systems have created leadership development models that could be adapted by other faiths. These include combining training with experience sitting in on boards that eventually leads to placement in community leadership roles. Developing similar programs in other denominations and FBOs could play a significant role in bridging the current gap in training and unevenness of stewardship quality we witnessed in many congregational system organizations.

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¹ See Schneider et al 2009 for a complete description of this study.

² The exceptions were pre-existing national or regional non-profits like the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services office in the study, which were supported at the denominational level. But even these established organizations reached out to individual congregations for support.

³ This was usually the Yearly Meeting, which is a conference of all the Meetings in a specific geographic area that usually encompasses several states. Traditionally, the Monthly Meetings is equivalent to a congregation, and the center for most decision meetings. By the 19th century, Friends had also developed Quarterly Meetings, which met four times a year for fellowship and business. In some areas, Quarterly Meetings own property affiliated with FBOs and are responsible for appointing board members to specific non-profits under their care. Yearly Meetings usually meet once a year to conduct joint business. They are regularly responsible for youth programs and facilities like summer camps, and sometimes are responsible for individual non-profits.

⁴ Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity, for example, view each poor person they serve in this manner.